



## State of Connecticut

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FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2015

#### GENERAL ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

#### PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 1126

#### "AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS."

Chairmen Cassano and Jutila, and Ranking Members McLachlan and Smith, and the Honorable Members of the GAE Committee, I am State Representative Mike Alberts of Woodstock. I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 1126.

I urge this committee to vote this bill out of committee with substitute language that would prohibit unopposed candidates from receiving grants under the Citizens' Election Program, which is something that I proposed earlier this session in a separate bill. The Citizens' Election Program was designed to ensure honest elections, but unfortunately many candidates take advantage of some of the loopholes that have become inherent in the CEP.

One of these loopholes is that unopposed candidates can still collect up to 30% of a full grant to cover campaign expenses. While SB 1126 does lower this amount to 20% of the grant, I feel that this does not go far enough. During the 2014 election cycle, a total of \$278,528.54 in CEP grants was awarded to unopposed candidates. This money could be wisely spent elsewhere, especially considering the dire financial climate that our state is in currently.

When a candidate runs unopposed, they obviously do not need as much funding as someone who is running a tight race with an opponent. If an unopposed candidate chooses to spend money, it should come from their own wallet, not from those of the taxpayers.

Again, I thank the Committee for the opportunity to comment on this legislation and I urge your support in moving it forward.